

Trustee Essentials

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Top Five Things Every Library Trustee Should Know

1. Know the difference your library makes in your community
2. Understand how the board's and director's roles differ
3. Be familiar with your library ordinance
4. Understand the board's control over library funds
5. Respect the city's obligation to account for all public funds

Questions

Duties and Responsibilities of the Board and Library Director

Library Board	Library Director
<p>Staff: Employ a competent and qualified librarian. Includes recruiting, hiring and annually evaluating the director based upon a well-defined job description and expectations. Adopt personnel policy and set adequate salary and benefits for all staff.</p>	<p>Staff: Recruit, hire and annually evaluate library staff based upon well-defined job descriptions and expectations. Suggest improvements needed in salaries, working conditions and personnel policy.</p>
<p>Policy: Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation of the library.</p>	<p>Policy: Carry out the policies of the library as adopted by the board. Recommend policies to library board.</p>
<p>Planning: Determine the direction of the library by studying community needs. See that a plan is developed for meeting needs and that the plan is carried out.</p>	<p>Planning/Management: Suggest and carry out plans for library services. Manage day-to-day operation of library. Design library services to meet community needs/interests. Report library's progress and future needs to the board.</p>
<p>Budget: Examine budget proposed by the director; make revisions as needed; officially adopt the budget; present library budget to mayor/city council. Review expenditures in accord with budget, amending line items within the budget if needed.</p>	<p>Budget: Prepare and submit to library board a budget request based on present and anticipated needs. Maintain complete and accurate records of finances. Expend funds based on approved budget.</p>
<p>Advocacy: Advocate for library through contacts with general public, civic organizations and public officials. Attend city council meetings to keep council informed on library activities. Work to secure adequate funds to carry out the library's services.</p>	<p>Advocacy: Advocate for library through contacts with general public, civic organizations and public officials. Attend city council and/or county supervisor meetings. Work to secure adequate funds to carry out the library's services.</p>
<p>Legal Issues: Be familiar with library ordinance as well as state and federal laws affecting the library.</p>	<p>Legal Issues: Be familiar with library ordinance and keeps board informed on laws affecting library.</p>
<p>Continuing Education: Participate in continuing education activities and encourages library director to do the same. Provide and/or see that new trustees receive an orientation to the library.</p>	<p>Continuing Education: Participate in continuing education activities and professional organizations; encourage continuing education for library staff. Participate in orientation of new trustees.</p>
<p>Communicate with the library director</p>	<p>Communicate with the library board</p>
<p>Collection Development: Adopt collection development policy.</p>	<p>Collection Development: Select and order all books and other library materials and resources.</p>
<p>Board Meetings: Regularly attend board meetings; conduct affairs of board at regularly scheduled meetings.</p>	<p>Board Meetings: Attend board meetings; prepare written progress report; provide information as needed/requested by board.</p>
<p>Board Member Recruitment: Recommend qualifications and candidates for board to mayor/city council. Notify city of board vacancies.</p>	<p>Board Member Recruitment: Assist in developing qualifications for new trustees.</p>

Library Budget: Roles and Responsibilities of the Director, Board, and City

Library Director	Library Board	City Council and Mayor	City Clerk or Administrator
		Mayor appoints library board members with approval of city council	
Keeps library board informed of library activities, needs and concerns.	Stays informed about library activities, needs and concerns.		
Prepares a draft budget request.	Reviews draft budget request including line items.		
	Approves final budget request based on board approved priorities.		
	Supports and advocates for budget request when presented to city.	Appropriates bottom line funding for library.	
Explains monthly library expenditures to the board.	Approves monthly expenditures; ultimately and legally responsible for how funds are spent.		Pays expenditures approved by library board.
Provides library board with monthly financial reports	Review monthly financial reports; prioritizes needs to match available funding (has authority to shift funds from one line item to another as needed)		Provides library with monthly report showing paid expenditures and status of budget.
Informs city council, mayor, city staff about library activities, needs and concerns.	Informs city council, mayor, city staff about library activities needs and concerns.	Stays informed about library activities, needs and concerns.	Stays informed about library activities, needs and concerns.